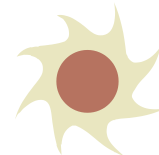


# VOLUNTEER VIBE

*Shawnee National Forest*

Vol. 2 Issue 2

Summer 2010



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## SAFETY CORNER...



**1.** Remember to call in to Kelly (618-559-8648) when beginning and ending your volunteer service for the day. Safety is the #1 priority of the volunteer program.

**2.** Always check weather conditions before the trip, Be prepared and pack a survival kit to be carried by each person. Kits should include but not limited to, survival blanket, water proof matches, extra water, and food.

**3.** Watch out for warning signs of hypothermia. Symptoms begin with feeling cold, experiencing pain in extremities and shivering as the body tries to raise its temperature.

**4.** Remember when volunteering it is also extremely important to wear proper PPE (personal protection equipment) at all times. Hardhats are a must, and gloves go a long way to protect hands. Sturdy shoes and well-worn jeans, along with layers to keep you warm and can be removed if necessary.

## Farewell Shawnee National Forest



My internship and schooling have come to an end at Southern Illinois. Though I cannot stay and work, I will be leaving with some great memories. The times I have had working with Kelly and the Shawnee Volunteer Corps have been amazing. I have had many laughs and met lots of great people. I have done everything from help plan an alternative spring break, to assisting in planning workdays, to rerouting trails, and working on a crosscut detail. I have worked with the fire crew to prepare lines, archeologists to clean a historic site, developed recreation to build a fence, and I've even been Smokey the Bear. It is going to be hard to top the experiences that I have had here, and I would like to thank you all for being a part of it.

"Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer."  
- Author Unknown

Sincerely,  
Tom "the Intern" Sniegowski



## Farewell Joel!

Joel Heideman has been volunteering with the Shawnee Volunteer Corps since 2007. During the past few years he became a Master Trail Steward, became certified in crosscut and chainsaw use, and spent many hours working alongside the summer trail crews and volunteers clearing trails, constructing trails and hauling gravel. Joel also became a big hit with Fieldcrest Middle School as "Joel the Science Guy". He delighted the students with plenty of hands-on experiments and home-made fireworks.

As many of you know Joel is married to Jennifer Sublett who left us last fall for a job on the Santa Fe National Forest in New Mexico. Now that the school year has ended Joel will be joining Jennifer in New Mexico. We wish him the best and will miss his ever ready, ever steady, hardworking and pleasant personality on work days.

Joel is also a past recipient of the Gold President's Service Award. Since 2007 Joel has provide the Shawnee National Forest with approximately 600 hours of service!

So long and happy trails!



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Leave No Trace Principles

- Plan Ahead and Prepare
- Travel & Camp on Durable Surfaces
- Dispose of Waste Properly
- Leave What You Find
- Minimize Campfire Impacts
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Considerate of Other Visitors

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics is an educational, nonprofit organization dedicated to the responsible enjoyment and active stewardship of the outdoors by all people, worldwide.

<http://www.Int.org/index.php>



Western New England College

### From the Shawnee and Back

*A volunteer's first-hand account of his Forest visits.*

Jason Seacat, Ph.D.  
Western New England College

The summer of 1995, I was selected to take part in a five-week summer internship program sponsored by the Shawnee National Forest and the Student Conservation Association on a National Conservation Crew. My group was assigned to work in the Lusk Creek Wilderness, more specifically, the Indian Kitchen State Nature Preserve and Lusk Creek Canyon area. As a high school student from a small town in Michigan, I had very little idea of that a wilderness trip would entail. I was excited by the thought of striking out and serving nature!

Needless to say, the five weeks I spent on the Shawnee touched my life and taught me many important lessons about nature. After the summer was over I vowed to definitely come back.

Fifteen years later, now a professor of psychology at Western New England College (WNEC), my thoughts still regularly focus on the Shawnee and my experiences here. As luck would have it, I was asked to take part in organizing an environmentally-focused service trip as part of WNEC's **Alternative Spring Break** program. A self-motivated student, Christopher Nuhfor, and I decided the Shawnee National Forest would be the best place for this trip. As a result, in March of 2010, Chris and I, along with eight students flew from Massachusetts to southern Illinois. For most of the students, this was their first trip into the wilderness and I was excited to share the Shawnee with them!

As I write this, I am on my final day in the Shawnee and have watched a new generation of individuals learn and grow immensely in their forest experience. The Shawnee has inspired them to give their all and to work for the benefit of those who call the forest home. The most inspiring moments for me this week, 15 years after my own first experience, have been to hear several of my own students declare that they will definitely be coming back!

There is not a better way to protect ecosystems across boundaries than to provide on-site, first-hand experience in educating a new generation.

### Shout Outs!!

Environmental Ambassador Award Winners – Russell Cerocke, Pawel Sawicki, Nathan Speagle, Brian Thietje, Lisa Thomas, Sarah Waggoner, & Ari Weiss





# LOOK AROUND

## Summer Time in Southern Illinois Some things to look for!

### June

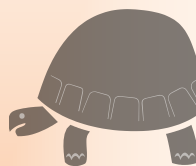


Look for White-tail bucks in velvet

Watch for turtles on roadways



Summer Solstice  
June 21st



### July

Chanterelle Mushroom Season



Blackberries! Chiggers!



Monarch Butterflies  
increasing



### August



Annual Cicadas signal that school starts soon

Hummingbirds increase at feeders as immatures join the adults



Indian Grass blooming

Source: National Events Calendar, Events Consultation by Todd Fink

## BELL SMITH SPRINGS

Another favorite place for me is Bell Smith Springs in Shawnee National Forest. From Marion, go east on Rt 13 to Rt 166. Proceed thru Creal Springs to Rt 45. Turn right and follow to the brown sign for the above at Ozark, IL. Turn left on Ozark rd and travel several miles to the trailhead parking area.

Many trail choices emanate from here at the overlook. Let's go left on the blue Sentry Bluff trail for a couple miles of overlooks over the canyon. The map shows this as a loop trail on both sides of the canyon if one is able to cross Bay Creek to the other side. Note one shortcut to the bottom along the way at Jay's Gap.

Back at the overlook one can go right on the red trail. Soon there is a junction: one segment goes downhill on steps to follow a base trail along a pretty cliff line. The other rim segment leads to Hill Branch trail, which starts at a signboard in hunting Branch picnic area. Details of that 2 mile loop are on my blog at <http://shawneegroup.blogspot.com-scroll> the right index. If you took the bottom base trail, two choices await you. The white markers travel along the cliff base on both sides of the canyon until a sign says dead end. A yellow trail will take you across the creek to the natural bridge if you don't mind getting your feet wet. Upon arrival at the bridge, note that you can view it from the bottom as well as climb up to the top on ladder for a different view, as well as continuing as the blue Sentry Bluff trail on this side of the canyon.

Submitted by Bob Tyson, Sierra Club volunteer



Shawnee Volunteer Corps is NOW on Facebook and Twitter!  
Check us out and join to stay up-to-date on the latest news!



# RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

## Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District 2010 Fall Work Days

Projects and Locations to be determined

September 11-National Day of Service

September 25-National Public Lands Day

October 9-12-Women in the Wilderness

October 16-Volunteer Banquet

October 23-Volunteer Work Day

November 6-Volunteer Work Day

November 13-Volunteer Work Day

November 20-Volunteer Work Day

Work Days begin at Murphysboro Work Center at 10 a.m. (participants should arrive 15 minutes in advance to complete required forms) and end back at the Work Center at 5 p.m.



## CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

The Shawnee National Forest is hosting *ARBORWILD!* at Evergreen Park in Carbondale on June 22<sup>nd</sup> from 9:30-11:30am and 12:30-2:30pm. We are looking for people to staff Conservation Education stations on a variety of topics – no experience necessary! Stay for one session or all day.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Linda Hauser at 618-687-1731 Ext. 102.

**Shawnee Volunteer Corps** needs individuals or groups to help with the Volunteer Banquet which will be held October 16, 2010.



Contact: Kelly Pearson  
Shawnee Volunteer Corps  
**Phone:** 618-687-1731 ext. 125  
**E-Mail:** shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com



## Congratulations to the 2010 graduating class of Master Trail Stewards

Russ Cerocke, Patrick Beezley, Dustin Cramer, Curtis Jensen, Dalton Anderson, Ted Craig, Bill Tanner, Ryan Muchow and April Reed.

Thanks to Dr. Terri Thomas for co-teaching MTS this year

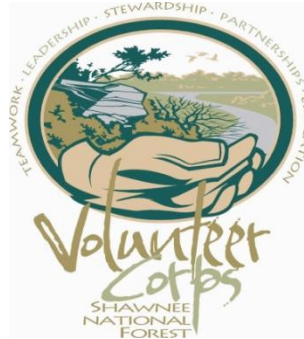


Remember to turn in your hours to Kelly!





Weed Watch volunteers and trainers take a lunch break in the middle of Caney Branch Natural Area in Burden Falls Wilderness Area.



Chris Evans (kneeling), River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area Coordinator, shows Weed Watch volunteers an invasive multiflora rose at Caney Branch Natural Area in Burden Fall Wilderness Area.

## Weed Watch Volunteers Working in Wilderness

Illinois Weed Watch is a volunteer citizen scientist project in which citizens are trained to monitor and collect data on the distribution of non-native invasive plant species in Illinois, in particular in our Natural Areas and other special places. Invasive species--organisms that evolved in one area of the world and become problematic in other areas--are becoming increasingly worrisome. Invasive species can aggressively overtake or displace native species causing a drastic reduction in our native biodiversity. This can result in enormous ecological and economic impacts.

Since its inception in 2008 over 40 Illinois Weed Watch volunteers have been trained in plant identification, data collection protocol and GPS mapping techniques. These volunteers have directly participated in the collection of non-native invasive species distribution data within Natural Areas in the Shawnee National Forest, State Parks and Crab Orchard and Cypress Creek NWRs. The data is used to gauge long-term trends and to develop non-native invasive species management strategies.

This year, 16 Weed Watch volunteers are focusing their attention on Wilderness Areas in the Shawnee, particularly Natural Areas within Clear Springs, Burden Falls, Garden of the Gods and Lusk Creek Natural Areas. And, as time and energy permit, they will also map pathways of invasion such as trails and streams within Panther Den and Bay Creek Wilderness Areas.

Terri Treacy with the Sierra Club Illinois Chapter is coordinating volunteer recruitment and training. For more information about the project or how you can get involved contact her at [terri.treacy@sierraclub.org](mailto:terri.treacy@sierraclub.org)

## CONTACT US

Kelly Pearson  
Shawnee Volunteer Corps  
**Phone:** 618-687-1731 ext. 125  
**E-Mail:** [shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com](mailto:shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com)

***Teamwork, Leadership, Stewardship,  
Partnership, Education***

[www.fs.fed.us/r9/forest/shawnee](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forest/shawnee)

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER?

Email us or drop off your story or article and it could be included in the next Volunteer Vibe Newsletter!!



